Pakistan's efforts to get support of European Union on Kashmir

1985. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Pak wooing European Union on Kashmir" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated the 21st February, 2002;

(b) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has succeeded in getting some members of European Parliament to press for special hearing on Kashmir in April, 2002; and

(c) if so, what steps have been activated by Government to counter the Pakistani move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) Some members of the European Parliament had proposed a hearing on Jammu & Kashmir. This proposal was not accepted. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament have decided on an exchange of views instead of a hearing, although the date and final theme are still undecided.

(c) The Government of India and our concerned missions in EU countries are in constant touch with the concerned Members of the European Parliament to sensitise them on the issues concerned, including the problem of cross border terrorism.

Bringing back Indians detained in Ukraine

1986. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 110 Punjabi youths were detained recently in the capital of Ukraine in whose cases Indian travel agents had lured them with promises of jobs and a better lifestyle in the European countries;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to bring them back; and

(c) what punitive action is being taken against the erring travel agents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) The Government is aware of detention of 110 individuals claiming to be Indian nationals in Ukraine for illegal entry.

(b) The Indian diplomatic Mission in Ukraine is in the process of ascertaining the nationality and passport details of the 110 detained individuals from the concerned authorities in India. These individuals will be repatriated to India on completion of this process. However, the Ukraine authorities have already deported at least 10 of them to Russia from where they entered Ukraine.

(c) None of the detainees interviewed by the Indian Mission in Ukraine was forthcoming in giving the name of the erring travel agent/tout.

Indians imprisoned in Guatemala

†1987. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that twenty five Non Resident Indians are still in captivity in Guatemala;

(b) if so, the Government's reactions thereto; and

(c) the details of the action taken by Government to set them free from the captivity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) According to information available with the Government, twenty five individuals claiming to be Indian nationals were detained by the Guatemalan authorities in January, 2002 for not possessing proper travel documents. These individuals are reported to have since been released.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.